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Globally Rare Six-Legged Tigers in Connecticut!

DR. PHIL NOTHNAGLE STRODE DOWNSTREAM ALONG THE SHORE OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER. Just minutes before, he had walked upstream and marked the location of the larvae of the federally endangered Puritan tiger beetle (*Cicindela puritana*) with small wooden stakes. These stakes, and the associated larvae burrows, were now under several inches of water as the tide rose. Survival of twice-a-day flooding is only one of the many amazing features of this insect species. Nothnagle wrote census data in a field notebook as he walked along the bank.

Nothnagle has been studying tiger beetles in Connecticut since 1989 with funding from both The Nature Conservancy's Small Grants Program and the state Department of Environmental Protection's Nonharvested Wildlife Program.

The Puritan tiger beetle is a small (about a half inch long) predatory beetle found in shoreline habitat only along the Connecticut River in New England and the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, with the largest New England population occurring in the Tidelands region of the Connecticut River.

Unfortunately, these beetles are struggling; their shoreline habitat is fragile, subject to erosion, modified by dam construction, and heavily used for human recreation. The beetles themselves are highly valued by collectors, due to the interesting patterns and metallic coloration of the body. All this contributes to the species' being listed as federally threatened — and highlights the importance of the Connecticut population.

Adult tiger beetles patrol small stretches of the shoreline in search of other invertebrates to eat. In fact, they are called "tiger beetles" because of their voracious appetites.

Tiger beetle eggs hatch in August and the first instar, or larval stage, digs its burrow in the sandy beach or nearby eroding cliffs. The larvae, which resemble caterpillars, prop themselves in their burrows with abdominal hooks and wait with their heads and large jaws at the mouth of the burrow. They lunge at small invertebrates such as ants and small flies as the victims pass the burrow entrance.

As the larvae grow, they must molt into the next instar, or stage, because their skin doesn't grow along with them. The second instars spend the winter in burrows and molt into third instars the following spring. These fragile creatures must survive the duration of spring flooding when their burrows are covered with water for weeks at a time. The beetle remains in

the third instar for another complete year, survives yet another spring, and finally becomes an adult in June, almost two full years after the beginning of its life.

"They are creatures of areas that are naturally highly disturbed by flooding," said researcher Phil Nothnagle. The species' tolerance for seasonal flooding is an adaptation to its preferred habitat; it requires open beach areas, and annual flooding and winter ice scouring are necessary to prevent vegetation from completely covering the shoreline of the Connecticut River.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

"Why should we care? What difference does it make if some species are extinguished, if even half of all the species on earth disappear? Let me count the ways.

"New sources of scientific information will be lost. Vast potential biological wealth will be destroyed. Still undeveloped medicines, crops, pharmaceuticals, timber, fibers, pulp, soil-restoring vegetation, petroleum substitutes, and other products and amenities will never come to light.

"It is fashionable in some quarters to wave aside the small and obscure, the bugs and weeds, forgetting that an obscure moth from Latin America saved Australia's pastureland from overgrowth by cactus, that the rosy periwinkle provided the cure for Hodgkin's disease and childhood lymphocytic leukemia, that the bark of the Pacific yew offers hope for victims of ovarian and breast cancer, that a chemical from the saliva of leeches dissolves blood clots during surgery, and so on down a roster already grown long and illustrious despite the limited research addressed to it..."

— Edward O. Wilson

"The Diversity of Life," 1992

This excerpt from Dr. Wilson's landmark book could well serve as an answer to the question, "Why The Nature Conservancy?" His luminous prose certainly highlights the importance of the work of people like Philip Nothnagle, whose research on the Puritan tiger beetle we feature in this issue of *From the Land*. The Conservancy's efforts to support research of this kind on rare species, and to fight the extinction of species by protecting their habitat, are all justified by Dr. Wilson's answer to the question, "Why should we care?"

Sadly, this question is often asked today in a variety of forms and forums with reference to small, struggling, obscure plants and animals that happen into the way of human activity. From the banks of the Connecticut River to the rain forests of Latin America, humankind asks the question with every act of development that destroys the habitat of rare species, the leading cause of extinction today.

Attempts to answer this question often fall on deaf ears for the very reason they should be heeded. *We don't know* what benefits may come from the many species facing extinction today. *We don't know* the consequences their extinction will bring. As Dr. Wilson observes, fewer than ten percent of the Earth's species given scientific names have been studied "at a deeper level than gross anatomy;" that is, dissected, much less their chemical properties or role in their ecological system analyzed. And only between one to ten percent of all species — it's impossible to say exactly — *have even been named*.

It is humbling to consider our lack of knowledge of the plants and animals with which we share our planet. Considering the awesome vastness of the subject, however, it is understandable. The challenge of studying and stewarding

the Earth's biota is galvanizing; what pursuit could be more important, or more rewarding, since success could mean the difference between the success or demise of humankind?

In Connecticut, we are doing our small part. Every year, we work to protect the most threatened and important land in our state, and care for it, so the rare species it supports can thrive. We have entered the complex and challenging arena of ecosystem protection through our Tidelands of the Connecticut River program, part of The Nature Conservancy's international LAST GREAT PLACES initiative. And we continue to add to our store of knowledge about our state's rarest species through our research grants programs, such as the Small Grants program that supports Phil Nothnagle's work, and by working alongside the state Department of Environmental Protection's Natural Diversity Data Base.

Clearly, we still have a long way to go, but the reward is great: no less than life itself. To once again quote Dr. Wilson, "We do not understand ourselves yet and descend farther from heaven's air if we forget how much the natural world means to us."



— LES COREY
Vice President
and Executive Director

On the Cover:
Lord Cove, Lyme, part of the
complex ecosystem of the
Tidelands of the Connecticut
River program, featured in the
this newsletter's supplement.

Globally Rare Puritan Tiger Beetle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE I

"In fact," added Nothnagle, "the Connecticut River poses an interesting problem. Because of dams and dikes, the river's hydrological regime is now completely different from when the tiger beetle first evolved."

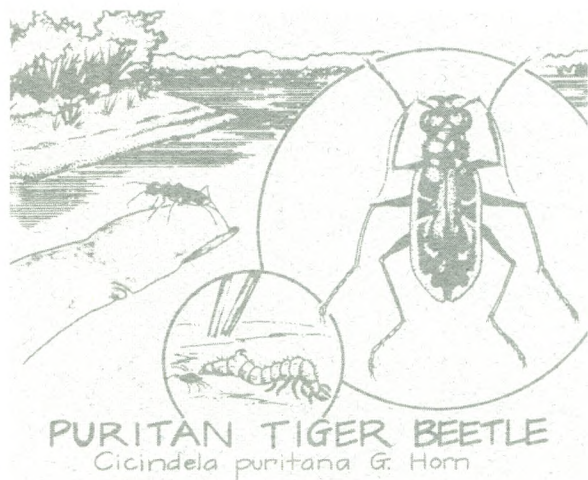
Vegetation is now crowding out some of the Connecticut tiger beetle areas. This past summer Phil, chapter staff, DEP staff, and volunteers removed vegetation in some areas in an effort to improve beetle habitat and restore some of the natural conditions that flooding and scouring would have provided.

One of the goals of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Puritan tiger beetle recovery plan is to reintroduce the insects at sites that previously had beetle populations but no longer do. However, the efforts of several researchers to move adult tiger beetle populations have been unsuc-

cessful, because the flying insects don't remain at the new site. Future efforts may require captive rearing of beetles so that the second or third larval stage can be released in the wild, in hopes that they will stay and repopulate the site once they mature.

Nothnagle says the Conservancy is way out ahead in protecting the Puritan tiger beetle. "It has been a pleasure working with the Conservancy," Nothnagle said. "Without the support of the Conservancy and the far-sighted people on its staff, the federal protection of this species wouldn't have happened."

— BETH LAPIN



© Judy Preston

▲
An adult Puritan tiger beetle; the name "Puritan" comes from the initial misconception that the species was located only in New England.

Beetlemania!

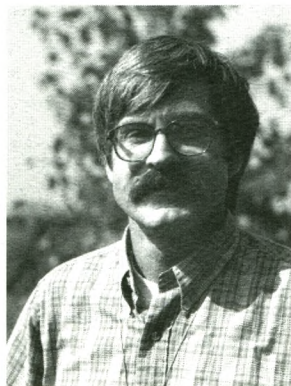
MAKING A THREE-HOUR COMMUTE each way to Connecticut's tiger beetle site and a 7 1/2 hour trip to study other species of tiger beetles on Martha's Vineyard, Phil Nothnagle shows commitment to his study of this genus.

Phil was introduced to tiger beetles as a doctoral student at Dartmouth College. "With tiger beetles, I found a neat system of animals that had some advantages over the birds I had been studying, because they didn't migrate to another part of the world for most of the year. Besides, after spending six years in the northern hardwood forests, complete with black flies, I found an organism that lived on the beach and flew only on sunny days," said Phil with a smile.

The fact that a previously widespread species could in fact disappear really grabbed him — and made him angry. He finds the human role in extinction alarming and wants to do something about it.

His wife, Suzanne, who manages family and business responsibilities while Phil is conducting field research, added that "understanding more about the world seems like a remarkably worthwhile thing to do." So, despite being fully employed running a family business, sending two children off to college, and playing the guitar, Phil continues to study tiger beetles.

— BETH LAPIN



© Judy Preston

◀ Dr. Phil Nothnagle.

The Nature Conservancy At Work

	Worldwide	Connecticut
Total Transactions:	15,466	625
Total Acres Protected:	7,406,000	19,280
Total Acres Registered:	494,000	6,307
Total Acres Saved	7,900,000	25,587
Members	741,154	16,856
Corporate Associates	1,154	23

Sunny Valley Preserve Grows by 12 Acres

The CHARTER OAK COUNCIL: Buying Nuts and Bolts

The newsletter you're holding is full of information on accomplishments you made possible.

That's right, your membership contribution helps pay for *all* of the hard work that goes into protecting land in Connecticut. It allows us to do what we must to permanently protect the state's most important and vulnerable areas and stop the extinction of rare plants and animals.

Soon there will be a new way for you to help us become even more effective. This fall the Connecticut Chapter will launch the CHARTER OAK COUNCIL, offering a variety of benefits and privileges for members who make an annual membership donation of \$1,000 or more to support the Chapter's operations.

Why is this kind of giving important? As grateful as we are to receive critical donations for specific chapter projects, such gifts are restricted and may not be used to staff the Connecticut Chapter or to equip our land protection, stewardship and research activities. That's why CHARTER OAK COUNCIL gifts are so critical: they will go toward the vital background work that makes all chapter projects possible.

By joining the CHARTER OAK COUNCIL, not only will you have the satisfaction of knowing that your donation is providing the necessary resources to do the nuts and bolts of conservation work in Connecticut, but you will ensure that you are kept constantly abreast of our critical conservation challenges and successes. You will be invited to personal, expertly-guided field trips to Connecticut Chapter preserves, sneak preview field trips to potential preserve sites, the Chair's annual event, and special national Conservancy trips. You will also receive updates from The Nature Conservancy chief executive officer, and the Connecticut Chapter's executive director.

Watch your mail this fall for our invitation to join the CHARTER OAK COUNCIL, and look for more details in the next issue of *From the Land*.

— PAT ANDERSON

THE SUNNY VALLEY PRESERVE RECEIVED A DONATION OF 12 ACRES of wooded hilltop land in Bridgewater in December. The donation is the gift of Patrick Dore of Sharon, who said he was pleased to help the Conservancy continue its progress on revitalizing the preserve.

The Conservancy agreed to accept the property after determining that it will contribute to overall plans to protect diverse open space and biological resources, said Preserve Director Christopher Wood.

George Pratt donated the Sunny Valley Preserve to the Conservancy in 1973 to contribute to "the physical and spiritual welfare of the public in a rapidly urbanizing area." The Conservancy's long range plan for the preserve includes improving public access and managing the open space areas to enhance the preserve's natural resources.

The topography and remoteness of this site provide suitable habitat for several interesting species, including broad-winged hawk, goshawk, and worm-eating warbler.

"The extensive mountain laurel stands, seasonal wetlands and pools, steep rocky ravines, and rugged terrain of the Dore property add a different dimension to this area of the preserve," Wood said.

"We're looking forward to coming out this spring to see what we can find," Wood added. "But more important is the property's contribution to the continuity of open space along the east ridges of the Housatonic Valley. River valleys are particularly important as migrating and connecting corridors for wildlife and plants."

Bridgewater First Selectman Bill Stuart said the addition was further demonstration of the Conservancy's commitment to restore and properly manage the preserve. "The best possible use for this parcel of land is as protected open space," Stuart said. I'm glad the Conservancy is building on George Pratt's legacy to Bridgewater by helping to protect our valued forests."

Bridgewater resident Dr. Peter Pratt, who is George Pratt's nephew, was also pleased that the Conservancy was enhancing the preserve that his uncle built. "It's a very pretty piece of property that always held George's interest," he said. "Adding it to Sunny Valley assures that it will continue to contribute to the area's scenic and natural character."

The Sunny Valley Preserve consists of more than 1,800 acres of farms, fields, and forests on 19 parcels in New Milford and Bridgewater. Three separate farm units occupy nearly 600 acres of the preserve, and the balance is primarily wooded open space.

Several miles of trails cross and connect Sunny Valley Preserve properties, passing through a variety of forest types and climbing steeply in places to several hundred feet above the Housatonic River. Scenic winter views of the Housatonic Valley are found at several spots, where visitors can find rest and refreshment as George Pratt intended. Diverse birds and other wildlife occur throughout the preserve, including turkeys, coyotes, and an occasional bald eagle. For a copy of the preserve's brochure and trail map, contact the office at 355-3716.

BECOME A PRESERVE TRAIL MAINTAINER!

In addition to participating in work parties, there is another way you can contribute to maintaining the beauty of our many preserves. For those of you who like being outdoors and working in the woods, becoming a preserve trail maintainer is the perfect opportunity to do both.

Many of our preserves have a network of trails, but with nearly 20,000 acres of land in ownership statewide, it is difficult for chapter staff to spend the amount of time necessary to maintain them. Being a trail maintainer would involve visiting "your" trail two to three times during the season, keeping overgrowth from crowding the trail, repainting directional blazing if needed, keeping an eye out for potential problems (such as erosion), keeping the trail free of downed limbs and litter, and checking for any unauthorized use (such as mountain biking, horseback riding, off-road vehicles) and notifying chapter staff. All that is required is a desire to work outdoors and a pair of pruners; a gas-powered brush cutter also works wonders.

Many of our preserves have volunteer monitors who visit them periodically, so the opportunity exists to have an extra pair of hands for helping with the trail work. Please contact David Gumbart or Marlene Kopcha at 344-0716 for further information.

Party On!

THE CONNECTICUT CHAPTER NEEDS VOLUNTEERS to help with a variety of stewardship activities across the state. If you would like to join a work party, please call Preserve Steward David Gumbart at 344-0716 for more information.

Iron Mountain, Kent
Thursday, June 2
Trail maintenance.

Buttermilk Falls, Plymouth
Fridays, July 8 and October 14
Preserve clean up.

Chapman Pond, East Haddam
Saturday, July 23;
Monday and Tuesday, July 25 and 26
Removal of invasive plants common reed and purple loosestrife from a freshwater tidal marsh. Canoes and small boats needed.

We are always looking for new volunteers for our field efforts. There are work parties, monitoring programs for piping plovers, bald eagle observation, and more. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Stewardship Assistant Jean Cox at 344-0716. We hope to see you this season! 🌿

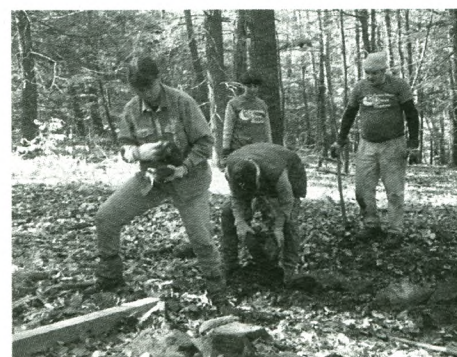
Below: Volunteer Ed Dimmock of Colchester removes common reeds, a nuisance plant species, at Chapman Pond in East Haddam.



© Marlene L. Kopcha



© Marlene L. Kopcha



© Toini Jaffe

Top: Volunteer Howard Pierpont of Stratford clears a trail at Rock Springs in Scotland.

Bottom: Volunteers install a water bar to control trail erosion at Bluff Head Preserve, Guilford.
Left to right: Assistant Preserve Steward Marlene L. Kopcha, Guilford Land Trust Treasurer Kenneth MacKenzie, and Appalachian Mountain Club trail maintainers Elaine Dowalcky and Walter Daniels. Also hard at work that day: Guilford Land Trust President Toini Jaffe, Steve A. Besse of the land trust's board of directors, and Bill Engstrom, trail maintainer coordinator for the Appalachian Mountain Club.

1994 Natural History Walks Program

Sign up today! Space is limited.

© Marlene L. Kopcha



▲ Chapter Director of Science and Stewardship Judy Preston leads a Natural History Walk among the fallen timbers of Cathedral Pines in 1993.

WISH LIST

Many chapter members have been very generous in lending and donating useful items to us. Any in-kind donation is tax deductible.

One of our current needs is a planimeter, an instrument used for estimating land area on maps.

If you would like to donate a planimeter, please call Chapter Ecologist Andy Cutko at 344-0716.

COME JOIN US AS WE EXPLORE SOME OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NATURE PRESERVES CONNECTICUT HAS TO OFFER. The Nature Conservancy's Natural History Walks are fun and informative. You'll learn about natural history and stewardship issues, such as the control of exotic species, as well as the ecology of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region. You'll also get lots of fresh air and exercise at some of the most beautiful natural areas in Connecticut, and meet other chapter members who share your interest!

Because we wish to provide a high quality experience, participation is limited to 20 individuals on each excursion. Please call Science and Stewardship Assistant Jean Cox at 344-0716 to register. A map to the meeting place and other information will be mailed to you shortly before the walk. We will go rain or shine.

PLEASE NOTE: Boat trips require your own canoe or kayak and a personal flotation device for everyone in your party.

❧ **Glaciers at Rock Springs, Scotland**
Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m. to noon
Come explore the glacial history of Rock Springs. We'll see landforms molded and left behind by glacial ice, and recreate an image of Rock Springs when tundra fringed the glacial margins. We'll learn how glaciers influenced today's landscape and vegetation. And, of course, we'll visit the springs after which the preserve is named.

🐟 **Secluded Salmon Cove —**
BOAT TRIP, East Haddam
Saturday, June 18, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
One of Connecticut's best kept secrets, Salmon Cove has a rich human history and abounds with natural wonders. Home to wild rice, salmon and numerous wetland bird species, Salmon Cove is also located in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region, and is an important component of the river's ecological system. Come explore this beautiful cove!

❧ **The Stewardship of Burnham Brook**
East Haddam
Saturday, July 16, 10 a.m. to noon
What does it take to maintain biological diversity? What are the threats to the integrity of a preserve? Burnham Brook, located in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region, is one of our

largest preserves. It was created by the vision of its dedicated stewards, Dr. Richard and Esther Goodwin. This special preserve contains two pristine streams, and the isolated acres necessary to support more than 180 bird species. Join us for a woodland stroll, and hear about what it takes to protect and maintain a large and dynamic nature preserve.

❧ **Cathedral Pines: The Life, Death and Rebirth of an Old Growth Forest, Cornwall**
Saturday, August 13, 10 a.m. to noon
A powerful testament of the power of localized tornados awaits the visitor to the Cathedral Pines Preserve. In just ten minutes in July 1989, three funnel clouds forever changed the course of Connecticut's largest stand of old growth pine and hemlock trees. Far from finding it discouraging, ecologists seek out this site to better understand the dynamics of forest succession — the slow process of a forest's regrowth and rejuvenation. Join us on a short, moderate walk to see the blowdown and learn more about the history of this fascinating site.

🦋 **A Natural History of Whalebone Cove — BOAT TRIP, Lyme**
Saturday, September 10, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
This lovely, shallow, circular cove off the Connecticut River is filled with the marvels of a freshwater tidal marsh community. We will take a leisurely tour, highlighting the dynamics and elements of marsh ecology. This cove is the location of the state's largest stand of wild rice, so it is a popular feeding and resting place for a variety of waterfowl. It is also a good place to see special aquatic plants.

❧ **Impressions of Pleasant Valley: Field Drawing, Lyme**
Saturday, October 8, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
The 250-acre Pleasant Valley preserve was an inspiration for the Lyme school of impressionist painters. Donated by the daughters of impressionist painter Oscar Fehrer, Pleasant Valley is the perfect setting to explore the art of field drawing. We'll alternate walking with drawing, and learn simple pointers on rendering and recording in the field. The emphasis will be on using drawing as a naturalist's learning tool. No experience necessary! Bring a note pad, small sketchbook or paper on a clipboard, and your favorite drawing implement. 🌿



TIDELANDS OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER



© Hal Malde

Year-End Easement Gifts Total 128 Acres in Tidelands Region

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY CONNECTICUT CHAPTER received two very generous year-end donations of land in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region in the form of conservation easements.

The two donations, both in Lyme, were of 104 acres adjacent to the Pleasant Valley Preserve from Frederick B. and Alva G. Gahagan and of 24 acres at Lord Cove from Endicott P. and Jane I. Davison.

Both of these gifts are at "core sites" of the chapter's Tidelands of the Connecticut River program, a comprehensive effort to protect the system of teeming wetlands of the lower Connecticut River. Core sites are the biologically most important and sensitive areas. The Tidelands region is one of The Nature Conservancy's LAST GREAT PLACES. The Conservancy is raising funds for the management of both these tracts.

A conservation easement — in Connecticut called a conservation restriction — is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on his or her property. The grantor of the easement retains ownership of the property, but in effect surrenders the right to develop the property, depending on the terms of the easement document.

The Pleasant Valley Preserve was created in 1992 through a gift of a partial interest in the 235-acre property from Catherine and Elizabeth Fehrer to The Nature

Conservancy Connecticut Chapter in December 1991. The sisters devised in their wills the remaining interest in the land to the chapter.

The preserve, which lies west of Route 156 just north of Lyme Town Hall, took the name of the area made famous by Lyme impressionist painter Oscar Fehrer (1872 to 1958), father of the Fehrer sisters, who adopted the area as a summer home and favorite area for painting, along with Eugene Higgins and Robert Vonnoh.

The Gahagan's restricted property lies just north of the Fehrer property, with frontage on Route 156. It includes shoreline on both banks of the Eight Mile River, a primary tributary of the Connecticut River. The tract includes wetlands where a stream meets the Eight Mile River, dry oak woods, and approximately two acres of land covered with conifers. Rolling hills of mostly oak, hickory, beech and hemlock rise sharply on the western side of the property.

On the same day as the donation to the Conservancy, the Gahagan family donated a conservation easement on nine acres on the opposite side of Route 156 to the Lyme Land Conservation Trust. The donation is from Gahagan, his mother, Sally J. Bill; and sisters Caroline B. Gahagan of Norwalk and Sally B. Gahagan of Newfield, N.Y. Protecting the watershed of the Eight Mile River has been a priority for the land trust for several years. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

Year-End Easement Gifts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE I

© Leslie Olsen



© Carole Evans



On the same day, the land trust also received a donation of one third interest in a 24-acre parcel owned by Margaret M. Clucas of Lyme near the intersection of Brush Hill and Tantumorum Road. The remainder of the parcel will be deeded to the land trust this year and next year.

Pleasant Valley is important both as the habitat of several rare species, and as part of the watershed of the Eight Mile River, which flows into the Connecticut River via Hamburg Cove, which is home to several struggling species.

With the addition of the Davison's most recent easement, the Lord Cove Preserve now totals 267 acres, all protected through gifts of land. The last addition to the preserve was the donation of a 35-acre conservation easement by the Davisons in 1991. Lord Cove is an excellent example of brackish tidal marshland, and provides habitat for a variety of rare plants as well as the king rail (*Rallus elegans*), which is threatened in Connecticut, the northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), which is endan-

gered in Connecticut, and the federally endangered bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).

The Davison's new addition is a wooded parcel with mixed hardwood and coniferous trees sloping down to tidal marsh. It includes an extensive area of brackish tidal marsh, creek and open water and a small area of floodplain forest.

The parcel includes habitat of ten plant species listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern in Connecticut, many found at multiple locations throughout the marsh complex. The state owns 363 acres at Lord Cove, the Old Lyme Conservation Trust owns 64 acres, and the Conservancy owns 208 acres.

Many bird species roost and perch within the marsh and surrounding uplands, among them species listed as endangered, threatened, and of special concern in Connecticut, including the sedge wren (*Cistothorus platensis*), least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), and savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), respectively.



— JOHN MATTHIESSEN

▲ Top: Frederick B. and Alva G. Gahagan's easement property at Pleasant Valley in Lyme.

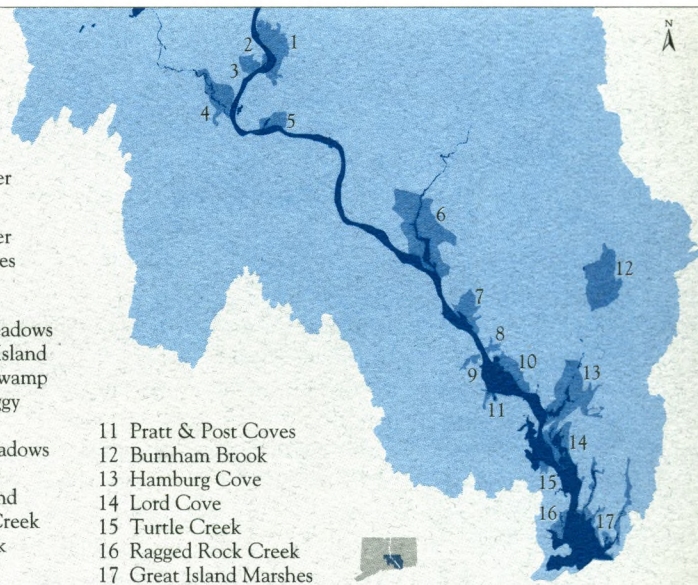
Bottom: Endicott P. and Jane I. Davison's easement property at Lord Cove in Lyme.

TIDELANDS OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

- Connecticut River Watershed
- Connecticut River & major tributaries
- Core Sites:

- 1 Wangunk Meadows
- 2 Gildersleeve Island
- 3 Dead Mans Swamp
- 4 Round & Boggy Meadows
- 5 Pecausett Meadows
- 6 Salmon Cove
- 7 Chapman Pond
- 8 Whalebone Creek
- 9 Chester Creek
- 10 Selden Creek

- 11 Pratt & Post Coves
- 12 Burnham Brook
- 13 Hamburg Cove
- 14 Lord Cove
- 15 Turtle Creek
- 16 Ragged Rock Creek
- 17 Great Island Marshes



Chester Creek the Subject of Critical Habitat Evaluation

THE CONNECTICUT CHAPTER is pleased to announce the selection of the Chester Creek watershed as the subject of a pilot study being conducted in partnership with the University of Connecticut with a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The study will use a computerized geographical information system to focus on the threats to the Chester Creek watershed. Chester Creek was selected for several reasons. In comparison with other watersheds under consideration, the Chester Creek watershed occupies a manageable area for the purposes of this one-year study, and includes a variety of land uses. In addition, local interest and support of town officials are critical to the success of this project, and Chester town officials have expressed enthusiasm for the project.

The CHETT (Critical Habitat Evaluation Through Technology) program is well underway. Laurie Giannotti, a graduate student at the University of New Haven with experience in the environmental field, has been

hired as project coordinator. Laurie and Alison Friedkin (see page 10) are using a geographical information system at the University of New Haven to compile different layers of information, including information on land parcels, land use, land cover, open space, and critical habitat areas.

These data layers will be used to analyze ecologically sensitive areas within the watershed. Once the project is completed, town officials will be given a copy of the database to aid in continued watershed planning. ➡

— JULIANA BARRETT



© Hal Made

Above: Chester Creek, Chester.

Below: Illustration of the naiad *N. Flexilis*. This aquatic plant is an excellent food source for such water fowl as the lesser scaup, mallards, and pintails, which eat their leaves, stems and seeds. The research on submerged aquatic vegetation will determine whether or not this species is found in the lower Connecticut River. ➡

Study of Aquatic Plants Funded

LAST SUMMER, WHILE YOU WERE CANOEING IN THE CONNECTICUT RIVER MARSHES, did you ever wonder about the plants that grow under the water, sometimes floating on the surface during low tide? These plants are called submerged aquatic vegetation, and include numerous different species, such as eel grass and tape grass, which often form dense beds of leaves and stems.

These plants are of interest not because they are rare, but because they are an important part of the aquatic ecological system as both a food and a habitat source, as well as an indicator of water quality. Many species of waterfowl feed on different parts of these plants, while fish and invertebrates use the dense beds as nursery areas and as protective cover from predators.

While many beds of these plants occur in the lower Connecticut River, we know little of their current distribution and abundance. The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter has been awarded a grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection's Long Island Sound Research Fund to document where the beds occur and what species they contain.

This study will involve a team of biologists snorkeling along the creeks and major tributaries of the Tidelands area, using aerial photographs taken under special conditions to verify the locations of beds, map them, take additional photographs, and collect plant specimens. The data collected will provide an important baseline for future studies. ➡

— JULIANA BARRETT


© Dolly Baker

Sound License Plates Fund Tidelands Brochure



DESIGN A LOGO!

Please consider using your creative ideas and thoughts to design a logo for the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program. The logo needs to combine the idea of conservation of a river system with some individual wildlife such as plants, birds, and fish that are an integral part of this ecological system.

We welcome all ideas. This is not a contest, but we will publish our favorite designs in a future Tidelands newsletter supplement. Submission of a Tidelands logo implies consent from the designer that the Conservancy may use part or all of the design with no further written consent of the designer, although the designer may discreetly incorporate a name, signature or initials in the design. 



The Nature Conservancy
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FAX (203) 344-1334

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY CONNECTICUT CHAPTER is pleased to announce it has received a grant for \$13,000 from the state Department of Environmental Protection for the design and printing of a full color brochure on the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program. The grant will fund the printing of 25,000 copies of the brochures, which will be distributed free of charge.

The funds were available through DEP's Long Island Sound License Plate Program. The DEP has sold more than 28,000 plates.

The purpose of this brochure will be to build public awareness and appreciation for the Tidelands region of the Connecticut River, to help the public enjoy this remarkable resource and participate in its conservation. It will outline the goals of

the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program, encouraging local residents and visitors to help protect this resource both actively — through donations of time, ideas, land or funds — and passively — by avoiding actions that can damage the system, like the careless disposal of toxic materials.

The brochure will also include a map of the Tidelands region showing how to get to the Conservancy's publicly accessible preserves, showing the best locations for river access, and how to get to the Conservancy preserves that can best be reached by water.

An announcement will appear in *From the Land* when the brochure is available.

—JOHN MATTHIESSEN

Preserve Fundraising Update

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY CONNECTICUT CHAPTER is still working to repay loans on additions to two important preserves in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region. One is the 215-acre Chauncey Hand tract at the Burnham Brook Preserve in East Haddam, which the chapter purchased in April of 1993, and an eight-acre addition to the Whalebone Creek Preserve in Hadlyme, which the chapter purchased from Virtue Realty of Orange in June of last year. Here's how far we have to go on each:



BURNHAM BROOK

We need \$54,806 to reach our goal!

Fund Raising Goal: \$550,000

Raised to Date: \$495,194



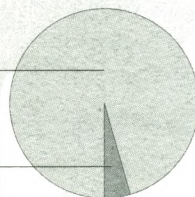
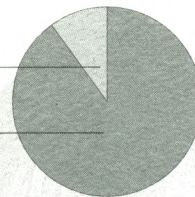
WHALEBONE COVE

We need \$144,540

to reach our goal!

Fund Raising Goal: \$151,500

Raised to Date: \$6,960





It's Time to Visit Poquetanuck Cove Preserve, Ledyard



Directions: From Interstate 95 north take Interstate 395, from which take exit 79A to Route 2A east. After the bridge crossing the Thames River, stay on Route 2A to the center of Poquetanuck. Turn right onto Cider Mill Road, which turns into Avery Hill Road. The preserve's entrance is 0.9 mile ahead on the right. Canoe access: Take route 2A onto Cider Mill Road (Avery Hill), and take the second right onto Arrowhead Drive. Go to end, turn right. Low tides restrict water access, so be sure to plan your trip accordingly.

Poquetanuck Cove is among the sites included in the chapter's *Preserve Sampler*, which can be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter. Our guide book to chapter preserves, *Country Walks in Connecticut*, contains more than 200 pages of information about our most accessible preserves. This is available to members for \$9.68, which includes tax, postage, and member discount.

BALD EAGLES SOARED AND THE OYSTER HARVEST WAS GOOD when Native Americans camped along the shores of Poquetanuck Cove in Ledyard. Today, the cry of the osprey and the large expanses of brackish marshes reflect the natural values that still dominate the preserve. The area remains undeveloped mainly due to the efforts of one woman: the late Desire Parker.

In 1953, Desire Parker purchased what she was searching for: a piece of land with a terrace, or narrow cliff, along a watercourse — a site that might have been used by native people. Miss Parker then encouraged archaeological research that confirmed her hunch — native people had camped and gathered oysters in this spot. In 1988, Desire Parker followed through on her life-long plan to permanently protect her land along

Poquetanuck Cove by donating it to The Nature Conservancy.

This 234-acre preserve contains a 1.5-mile loop trail that passes through a variety of habitats. The trail begins among secondary growth of oak-beech forests that was once farmland. In the area are a number of large “wolf” trees, which are relics from the agricultural era when trees along the edges of fields could spread their branches. As the trail continues, it enters a cool, moist hemlock ravine containing a stream flowing across moss-covered rocks. The trail emerges from the shadows to stunning views of the cove and Duck Island. It then crosses drought-influenced pitch pine areas before returning to mixed hardwood forests of oaks and beech. Throughout the preserve is a sense of gentle tranquility, which may have contributed to Miss Parker's love for this area. 🌿

— BETH LAPIN



▲
Chapter Director of Land Protection
Carol Evans at Poquetanuck Cove,
Ledyard.

UTC Sponsors Two Eagles/Dos Aguilas Exhibition

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT UNITED TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION OF HARTFORD has taken the lead in sponsoring a world class exhibition: the bilingual "Two Eagles/Dos Aguilas: A Natural History of the Mexican-American Border."

Mexican hognose snake.



"UTC's leadership role in making this exhibition possible underlines the company's commitment to international resource conservation and education," said Nature Conservancy President John C. Sawhill. United Technologies is a global corporation with major operations in Mexico as well as many other countries of the world.

On October 15, 1993, The Nature Conservancy and the Smithsonian

Institution launched a four-year tour of this unique exhibition, which uses photographs to profile the 2,000-mile border between Mexico and the United States. On January 8 the Arizona Chapter, with the Arizona Botanical Society and the Phoenix Zoo, held a reception with the honorary co-chairmanship of Arizona Gov. Fife Symington and Mrs. Ann Symington at the Arizona State University Museum of Anthropology. United Technologies Corporation was honored as the corporate sponsor and primary agent for the success of the exhibit. Frank McAbee attended with his wife Mary Lou, representing UTC. McAbee was senior vice president of environmental and business practices at UTC, and is now retired. Connecticut Chapter Director Leslie N. Corey Jr. also attended the reception.

The border between the United States and Mexico is a cradle of biological diversity almost unmatched on the continent. The strip 50 miles north and parallel to the border contains 95,000 square miles of the United States' richest biological diversity. The corresponding area to the south of the border is one of the areas of highest biologi-

cal diversity in Mexico, the country with the largest number of endemic species in the world. Among the bird species that winter in the border region and nest in Connecticut during the summer are the ruby-throated hummingbird, the rose-breasted grosbeak, the American red start and the hooded warbler.

"Dos Aguilas" centers on a photographic survey of the border, from rocky Pacific islands to the meandering sand spits of the gulf coast, by renowned photographer Tupper Ansel Blake. It is the result of Blake's five-year collaboration with Mexican and American biologists, ranchers, conservationists and Indian tribes.

This magnificent exhibition will send a powerful conservation message to millions of viewers in approximately 16 cities over the next few years, focusing on the beauty and tragedy of a region that has endured unrelieved conflict throughout its history. "Two Eagles/Dos Aguilas" is a rare opportunity for residents of this fragile ecological system to learn of the beauty that surrounds them and the protection it needs.

The Nature Conservancy believes that by revealing the beauty of the borderlands, people will gain a better understanding of both biological and cultural diversity. The exhibition encourages recognition of the impact of humans on these fragile ecosystems, and stimulates a sense of responsibility for the complex and delicate environment they inhabit.

The two eagles of the title are the bald eagle and the Mexican eagle, whose ranges overlap the border territories. "Los Dos Aguilas" are the messengers of a new hope for the possibility of creative conservation partnerships between countries.

Working together, United Technologies and The Nature Conservancy provide an inspirational model for corporate partnerships that will help preserve the natural areas of the world, very much in the spirit of the mission of the Two Eagles/Dos Aguilas exhibition.

A companion book to the exhibition will be issued by the University of California Press. 🌿

— LESLIE LEMAY

Companies that Match Gifts to The Nature Conservancy

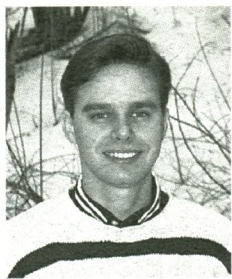
AT THE URGING OF EMPLOYEES, DIRECTORS, AND RETIREES, more and more companies are matching charitable donations. The following is a list of companies that double their giving power by matching gifts to The Nature Conservancy.

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Chapter Acorns Spot More Than 30 Eagles

NEW STAFF



Trevor Law has joined the chapter as capital campaign administrator. In this newly created position, he will assist Development Director

Colleen MacNeil Freeman in planning and implementing the chapter's capital fund raising efforts.

Most recently, Trevor was assistant director of the Stamford Symphony Orchestra, where he was responsible for ongoing operations, including fund raising. Trevor has also worked in development and strategic planning for Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York, Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and as a consultant for Sumner Rahr & Co. in Chicago.



Andy Cutko joined the Connecticut Chapter in March as the new stewardship ecologist. A graduate of Williams College and

Duke University, Andy has worked for an environmental consulting firm and for private, state, and federal conservation organizations. Most recently Andy worked as a biologist with the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory.



Marian Moore joined the Connecticut Chapter in March as associate director of development. Marian recently finished as capital campaign

director for the Greater Hartford Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center in Windsor. Before that, she directed a capital campaign for the Open Hearth, a home for homeless men in Hartford.



Pictured above: Naturalist Jim Stone (center) helps Henk de Haan and chapter Acorn Martin Cooper (left and behind) spot bald eagles. Also on the lookout are Austin Barney and Robert Gorton (far right). This year, the chapter's Acorn members spotted more than 30 eagles.

V O L U N T E E R P R O F I L E

ALISON FRIEDKIN of Middletown has just finished working as an intern in the Connecticut Chapter office. Alison's goal is to add to her experience as a park ranger with the National Park Service. Since November, Alison has become an invaluable member of the office staff, working in a variety of areas, ranging from land protection to membership.

Alison is applying her knowledge of geographical information systems to the CHETT project (see Tidelands insert, page 3) where she is helping to computerize land parcel information. She is working with Land Protection Specialist Lesley Olsen on deed research and site design maps, with Development/Membership Assistant Dot Millen on membership projects, and with Science and Stewardship Assistant Jean Cox using the Biological Conservation Data system to record land tract information.

Alison's outdoors skills have been very useful to the stewardship team, assisting with boundary posting and preserve management. Her

insights and ideas have also been of great value to the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program planning efforts in several areas.

Alison is an avid skier, spending almost every weekend on the slopes of Vermont. This is one person who enjoyed all of last winter's storms! When she's not on the slopes, Alison snowshoes, bikes and hikes. Her enthusiasm and contributions to the Connecticut Chapter are greatly appreciated. 🌿



— JULIANA BARRETT

Please register for all activities at Devil's Den and the Katharine Ordway Preserve by calling 226-4991.

For information on Sunny Valley activities please call the Sunny Valley Preserve office at 355-3716.

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m. to noon
Sketching Devil's Den with Blake Hampton
This well-known artist will open your eyes to a new view of the landscape and give sketching instruction. Beginning artists are welcome to this very popular course. Sketching materials will be available at \$3 per person. Limit: 15 participants.

Saturday, May 21, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Saugatuck Valley Trails Day Hike
Spring rains feed the streams, and we'll walk from the West Branch of the Saugatuck to the East. Doug Dudfield and Marcia Kendall will be our leaders on this 10-mile hike. Bring along a lunch and a camera. Call Devil's Den for directions on where to meet.

Sunday, May 22
Spring Migrants on Sunny Valley Preserve
Join a local bird expert on early morning walk. Call for details 355-3716

Sunday, May 22, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Native Plants and Flowers at the Katharine Ordway Preserve
Join Leader Pam Sapko to learn about late spring bloomers.

Saturday, June 4, 6 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
Breeding Birds at Devil's Den
Learn about the many birds that nest in the Den's interior forest. Leader: Dr. Steve Patton

Saturday, June 4, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Trail Days at Sunny Valley Preserve
Celebrate Trails Day as the Sunny Valley Preserve rededicates the trail system in Bridgewater. Guided walks scheduled, bring your own picnic to enjoy pondside. Call for a schedule or to register.

Sunday, June 5, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Tree Identification Walk at the Katharine Ordway Preserve
Leader Fred Moore will talk about the trees and magnificent flowering laurel in our woods.

Monday, June 6, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Nature Photography with Alison Wachstein
The first session in this very popular three-part series for adults will take place in the photographer's home studio, where she will give a slide presentation and basic camera instruction on composition, lighting and exposure in photographing nature and the figure in the landscape. Limit: 20 participants. Beginning photographers welcome. See also June 12 and 20. Please call Devil's Den to register.

Saturday, June 11, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Workday at Devil's Den
Before the full heat of summer, we'll get the trails ready for vacation use.

Sunday, June 12, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Nature Photography Walk with Alison Wachstein at Devil's Den
In part two of this series for adults, Alison Wachstein will answer camera questions as you photograph your subjects. See also June 20.

Tuesday, June 14, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Adult Walk at the Katharine Ordway Preserve
Our abundant laurel should be in full bloom. Leaders: Mary Callahan and Helene Weatherill

Saturday, June 18, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Saugatuck Valley Trails Day Hike
Celebrate the coming vacation season by hiking 10 miles along the reservoir trails with Bill Lyons from the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company. You'll find out about the history of the area and learn how BHC manages watershed lands. Call the Devil's Den Office to register and find out where to meet.

Monday, June 20, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Nature Photography with Alison Wachstein
For the last session of the series, you'll return to the artist's studio to display the photographs you took at the Den and discuss ways to improve them during a shared, informal, and positive critique.

Saturday, June 25, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Family Nature Walk at the Devil's Den
Celebrate the beginning of summer with leaders Jackie and Dick Troxell.

Saturday, July 9, 10 a.m. to noon. Butterflies!
Lepidopterist Vic Demasi will teach you how to identify butterflies and moths and the habitats and foods that will attract them to your own property. Meet at the Katharine Ordway Preserve.

Monday, July 11, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Adult Walk at Devil's Den
Enjoy a midsummer nature walk with Mary Callahan and Doris Falk.

Saturday, July 16, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Historical Tour of Devil's Den
In the cool of the morning, learn why early colonists came to the Den and how they coped with the rugged terrain. Leaders: Missy Dorsey and Terry Fisenne Gleim.

Saturday, July 23, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Family Walk at Devil's Den
Enjoy a stroll by streams and pond with leaders Jackie and Dick Troxell.

Saturday, July 30, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Insect Ecology at Devil's Den
Entomologist Henry Knizeski will teach you the basics of insect identification and talk about the biology of these abundant creatures.

Saturday, August 6, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Say Thanks to our Shade Trees!
We'll walk at Devil's Den and learn about our shady friends and all the positive things they do for us. Leaders: Missy Dorsey and Andrea Johnson.

Saturday, August 13, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Family Nature Walk at the Den
Bring the whole family! Leaders: Terry Fisenne Gleim and Steve O'Connell.



Please Join Us!

___ Yes, I'd like to become The Nature Conservancy's newest member in Connecticut.

___ \$100 (Acorn)* ___ \$50 ___ \$25

___ I'm already a member, but would like to join the ranks of Connecticut Acorns.*

Double your gift — send in your corporate matching gift form!

* Acorns are Conservancy members who contribute at least \$100 annually to chapter operations. Connecticut Acorns are exempt from national membership dues notices, are invited on Acorn trips, and receive early notices for special events.

Please make checks payable to The Nature Conservancy and mail to 55 High Street, Middletown, CT 06457-3788. Thank you!

The Nature Conservancy 

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From The Land 

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A Condominium Helps Protect the Tidelands

CHAPTER MEMBERS PHILIP AND JANE ASHTON OF MERIDEN have found yet another creative way to support The Nature Conservancy. The Ashtons have donated a condominium in Winston-Salem, North Carolina toward preserving one of their home state's most important natural habitats, the Tidelands of the Connecticut River.

"We were at a stage when we wanted to divest ourselves of some of our more remote investments," said Philip T. Ashton, who is chairman, president and chief executive officer of Yankee Energy System, Inc. of Meriden. "As a charitable contribution, it greatly benefited The Nature Conservancy with no great cost to us."

Because the Ashtons' property is not designated as a critical habitat, the Conservancy will resell the property and use the proceeds to protect lands in an endangered ecological system. Such a contribution, or "trade land," is a vehicle for donors to provide cash support through a gift of property, while simultaneously receiving a charitable deduction and avoiding capital gains taxes. The Ashtons have applied their gift toward the Tidelands of the Connecticut River program, which has been recognized as one the LAST GREAT PLACES in this hemisphere.

The Ashtons are devoted to helping conserve the Tidelands region, and their enthusiasm has spread to others as well, including people at Ashton's company. Yankee Energy's innovative program of matching selected shareholders' stock donations recently netted the Conservancy's Tidelands project more than \$26,000.

In addition to being chapter Acorns and Conservancy Lifetime Members, Phil and Jane Ashton have been singularly resourceful in their support of The Nature Conservancy through the years. In the self-reliant Yankee tradition, the Ashtons take it upon themselves to recycle wherever they can, even down to the cars they drive, which include "recycled" Red Cross station wagons. They further recycled one such wagon by donating it for use in the Conservancy's crucial land preservation work. The Ashtons also regularly donate proceeds from recycled bottles and cans they collect.

Donating a recycled condominium, however, is "above and beyond," said Connecticut Chapter Director Leslie N. Corey Jr. "It reveals the breadth of Phil and Jane Ashton's vision of protecting our planet's Last Great Places." 

— TREVOR LAW

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